UNITY. FREEDOM.

THE

Unitarian

MONTHLY.

"One God, one law, one element,
And one far-off divine event
To which the whole creation moves."—*Tennyson.*

An Organ of Reasonable Religion.

FAITH. FELLOWSHIP.

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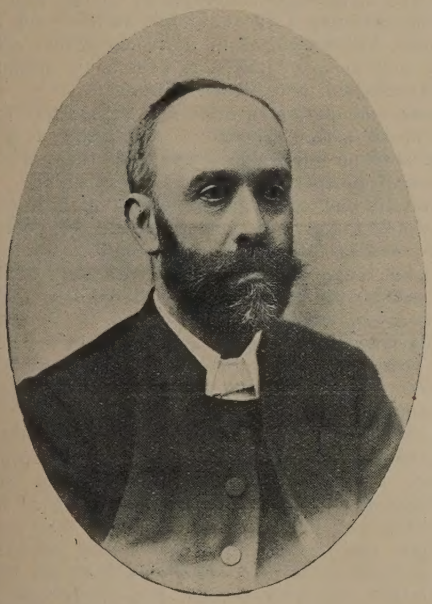

Rev. GEORGE EVANS, M.A., Gorton.

Born at Carmarthen, South Wales, 1851; entered Presbyterian College, Carmarthen, 1870, in preparation for the Unitarian ministry; gained Berman Scholarship, but disqualified by being over age; took Dr. Williams' Scholarship, 1873; M.A. degree at Glasgow University, 1876; continued studies at Manchester New College, London, 1876 to 1879, and won the Hibbert Scholarship by examination, which he held for three years; at Leipzig University, 1879, under Franz Delitzsh for Hebrew, and his son, Friedrich Delitzsh (the well-known Assyriologist) for Assyrian, Syriac, and Chaldee, and Krehl for Syriac, Arabic, and Æthiopic. At Leipzig wrote an essay on Cuneiform research at suggestion of the late Dr. Vance Smith for the Hibbert Ttrustees; elected Hibbert Fellow, and held the Fellowship two years; the essay enlarged, printed and published on behalf of the Trustees. During his Hibbert Fellowship, while Unitarian minister, Plymouth, 1884-87, contributed Assyrian notes to "Theological Review"; minister, Chesterfield, 1887-94, and six years a master at Chesterfield Grammar School. Commenced his present ministry at Brookfield Church, Gorton, Manchester, June, 1894. Mr. Evans' sons—Mr. Walter Herbert Evans, M.Sc., and Mr. George Arthur Evans, B.Sc., as well as his daughter, Miss Gwladys Evans, M.A., all of Manchester University — have worthily followed him in scholastic distinction. Mr. Evans is a preacher possessing the persuasive faculty in expression and delivery, strong in plain commonsense, which goes both to the head and the heart of his hearers. Brookfield Church, of which he is minister, is one of the most handsome buildings in the Unitarian Connexion, situated in an extensive burial ground beautifully laid out, fronting on the main road, and connected there are spacious school buildings. In the midst of a large and growing population, the Brookfield congregation and Sunday School exercise prominent influence and draw to themselves a considerable body of earnest workers.

Life.

To see the beauteous world,
To breathe the fragrant air,
To hear accordant sounds,
To feel, to be,—
This is not life!
There is a larger view,
There is a deeper breath,
There is a finer touch,
And a diviner sound,
Than sense can e'er reveal.
To see the glory in the Infinite,
To hear the breath of the Almighty,
To hear the voice of the I Am,—
This is to live.

—W. A. McKeever.

What is Religion?

"The old grounds of belief are rapidly crumbling away."—Gerald Massey.

Not masses, nor crosses, nor Catholic creeds,
Not mumbling of aves, nor counting of beads.
Not church-going, psalm-singing, paying of priests,
Attendance on sermons, prayer-meetings or feasts;

Not wearing a broad-brim, and plain "thou" or "thee,"
Or straight-collared coat, from the world's fashion free.
It is not to kneel with a long pious face,
Or sing solemn anthems in some holy place.

In sect to be cradled, or on a creed nursed,
Believing that every outsider is cursed;
That God has in heaven ordained us to dwell,
But left countless millions to drop into hell.

Religion is love in the heart and the life,
The soother of sorrow, destroyer of strife.
The soul's best physician, relieves every pain,
And in her dark caverns lights hope once again.

It curses no one who has doubts of its creed;
It hunts up no martyrs to burn or to bleed,
It tells of no devil with tortures and chains,
No hell of unending and horrible pains.

It seeks not to bless men by force or by fear,
But draws them with love to a God very near.
It tells of the right, and it whispers Obey:
To happiness, virtue alone is the way.

This world it makes happy, and then, beyond this,
It points to another all sunny with bliss.
Bright heaven of beauty, how fair are thy skies!
Thou home of the good, and thou school of the wise.

—William Denton.

The Chronicles of Parson Pimm.

By the Author of "Randal's Principle," Etc.

CHAPTER I.

Parson Pimm had gone through a long and varied experience as a Christian worker and minister, and in the public life of the districts in which he had lived.

He was a very human sort of creature,—as all parsons are. He detested every extreme kind of clerical attire approaching to anything of a priestly look about it, and resented the notion that a parson is a different kind of man from the ordinary. Occasionally he made mistakes, and in a way he was glad that people should see how much in that respect a parson was like other people.

He said sometimes that a congregation which expects their parson to be a man of pure character, of unblemished reputation, sober, temperate, keeping out of debt, and never in a temper, had no right to require in him what they were not equally prepared to be and do themselves, and that to be in their own lives the example they wished him to be was the way to support him best in all that a parson should stand for.

He had reached the period when he could no longer be considered a young man; and often had he been asked to relate his most stirring experiences. And when he had narrated some of them in private or in public he was told that they ought to be written down and recorded in a permanent form. So ultimately he set about writing them; and they are here first presented to the public as they came from his pen.

MY TITTLE-TATTLE TRIALS.

I had just finished my course at College, and was invited to supply a vacant pulpit at D—— for four Sundays, which resulted in the congregation giving me a unanimous invitation to become its minister; and I accepted, and settled there.

Being a single young man, I of course had to go into apartments. Though I was engaged to be married to an admirable young lady there was no immediate prospect of that event happening.

Naturally my congregation took a great interest in helping to get their young minister comfortably placed amongst them. They thought it would be much the best if he could reside with some of their own people—the wisdom of which opinion, though questionable, was not then disputed.

So it ended in my taking apartments in the house of a young married couple, who were earnest and devoted members of the congregation and active workers in all its concerns.

I could not have been made more comfortable. Mr. and Mrs. Dorking were most estimable people. Though a little my senior there was not much difference in our ages. Mr. D. was in a good position in a local business firm, and they took me in to share their home, not because they needed to add to their income, but partly because the house was larger than they needed, and partly out of a very friendly feeling for their new minister. They were very kind, and they certainly made my solitary lot much more pleasant by being like a brother and sister to me, without at all trespassing upon my privacy or my time required for the duties of my ministry.

I had a cosy front sitting-room in which there was a good accommodation for my books, and suitable both for the purposes of a study and for the reception of any visitors who might call to see me; and a bedroom that was equally convenient and satisfactory for my requirements. I have every reason to entertain the highest respect for Mr. and Mrs. Dorking, and never think of them without feelings of the kindest regard.

But there were some in the congregation, including two fussy maiden ladies, who, as it turned out, were not quite well satisfied at my going to live with the Dorkings. The two maiden ladies were busy workers in chapel affairs and especially in the Dorcas Society.

And before I had been settled long at the Dorkings I found that quite a number of the people were frequently calling to see me at most unusual times in the day, including the Misses Quiney—the two fussy ladies.

Now Miss Adela Quiney, the younger of the two, though much my senior, interested herself very much in my personal welfare. It appeared afterwards that the report of my being engaged was regarded by her as only a rumour. And though I had no suspicion of any design upon me—on her part, her persistent attentions became somewhat of a nuisance to me at our week-night meetings and parties at the school, as well as at our Sunday services. And whenever she came alone to speak to me there was an awkwardly shy self-consciousness that was quite ridiculous. However, I discouraged her attentions in every way I could short of giving pain, and I felt confident that I should be able to steer clear of any real danger.

But alas! it was not to be. Poor fussy Miss Adela in an unguarded moment at a Dorcas meeting ventured to suggest to some other single ladies, equally foolish, that she did not think it was quite proper that their young minister should live with a young married couple like the Dorkings. She said that Mr. D. was away all day at his business, and that practically Mrs. D. and myself were left alone each day in the house, and that it was not right.

Once this suggestion was broached—the harm was done. Some of the ladies could not put it out of their minds. And it simmered in their thoughts so much that before long, quite unknown to me, there was a meeting of some of the ladies, anxious for the welfare of their minister, and with a view to give people no room to talk, appointed two of their number to wait upon Mr. Dorking to persuade me to seek rooms elsewhere.

Of course Mr. D. was astounded—and so was Mrs. D,—and so was I. Indeed astounded and indignant too. We considered it was an outrage. And an officer of our church who was a confidential friend of Mr. D. on being told of it was so annoyed at such a proceeding that he unwisely summoned a members' meeting with the idea of censuring the ladies for their meddling interference. I attempted to prevent the meeting being held, but could not. It was held. The ladies adhered so to their view, that there were two sides to the question, no decision was come to, and only bad feeling engendered.

The division of opinion on the wisdom of my living at the Dorkings continued so equally balanced that my position became intolerable. I refused to refer in any way to the childish suspicion of any possibility of impropriety in my being at the Dorkings. I admired the way in which Mr. and Mrs. D. bore all the annoyance. They were splendid. They felt for me—more than for themselves. But so uncomfortable did the affair make me that I resigned my position.

The difference in the congregation upon the matter was so serious that it caused some of the worthiest people to leave. And the Dorkings felt they could not go near the place again.

The reason for my resignation got abroad, and other churches seeking a minister fought shy of me; and what is worse still—the young woman to whom I was engaged to be married—when I told her what had happened—broke off the engagement and set herself free from me.

This kind of experience is very rare in any church. It was a very severe lesson to me. I was not conscious of having been at fault in the matter myself, but I was unfortunately the victim of foolish tittle-tattle, as also were the Dorkings. The suspicious meddlers, and they only, were guilty of what wrong doing there was.

Moral: (1) A minister is safer if he is a married man. (2) They who bridle not their tongues against evil speaking forget what religion means—their religion is vain. (3) We should all remember that we have the characters and the happiness of other people in our keeping, and both speak and act so as to guard them against injury.

It was not a fortunate beginning of a ministerial career.

(To be continued.)

The Worker that Counts.

I saw upon the face of a watch three workers. There was a very thin one, so thin that I could barely see it, and it seemed to be moving in a little circle of its own, and to have nothing to do with the other workers. One of the other workers was long and genteel and graceful. The third worker was short and slow. I looked at them for a while, and I said, "There can be no doubt in the mind of any one who looks at this watch who the worker is: the worker is evidently that little one that moves in a circle of its own. I can see it move; it moves lightly, blithly, trippingly; I can see it. The long one I can hardly see move at all until I have been watching it for a considerable time; and as for the short one, I think I may safely declare that it does not move at all."

See how a stranger to the mechanism of a watch can talk; how ignorant he is of what the workers are doing! You may take off the little thin worker and do very little damage; you may even take off the long and graceful worker, and, though you will suffer a considerable injury, yet you can do without its service at all. But if you take off that little, short, slow worker, you could never tell the time of day. —The Late Dr. Parker.

I pray not that
Men tremble at
My power of place
And lordly sway.
I only pray for simple grace
To look my neighbour in the face,
Full honestly from day to day.
—J. Whitcomb Riley.

What Unitarians Believe.

The question is often asked, what do Unitarians believe? The difficulty in giving what is called a straightforward answer is that Unitarians are unlike all other religious bodies in this, that they have never admitted any creed or authoritative confession of faith. If anyone desires to join them, it is supposed that he does so because he finds their forms of worship acceptable, and agrees more or less with what he generally hears preached from their pulpits. No questions are asked as to how much or how little he believes, he becomes a member because he wishes to do so, and has all the privileges of membership forthwith.

So it comes to pass, that some Unitarians are much nearer the more popular forms of Christianity than others are, and no one has the right to find fault with another for believing too much or too little. Still there are certain things on which there is a general, if not unanimous, agreement, and we may say—without committing anyone, that

UNITARIANS DO NOT BELIEVE

In the Trinity, or that there are three persons in One God.

In the Incarnation, or that Jesus Christ is God and man in one person.

In Verbal Inspiration, or that the Bible is the infallible Word of God.

In the Atonement, as meaning that man is a fallen creature, and needs a mediator to approach God.

In Justification by Faith, in the sense that either church or creed are necessary to a good and godly life.

In the Finality of Death, or that this life is man's only probation, and eternal weal or woe the issues of death.

In Satan and Hell, or that there is in God's universe any place for a hell, where evil, and hatred, and misery are eternal.

UNITARIANS DO BELIEVE

That there is One God; and that all who ever so dimly recognise, and, "in spirit and in truth," reverence an Unseen Power which "makes for righteousness," are His worshippers.

That Jesus of Nazareth was a great teacher, rightly called Christ (or the anointed), because "God anointed him with the Holy Spirit and power" (Acts x., 38) and that true Christians are all those who try to think and act after his precepts and example.

That the Bible, the collection of our sacred writings, is the best of all books of religion, inasmuch as it contains more that is true and good and helpful about God and righteousness than does any other book.

That Man is the child of God, and has always free access to him as a son, even a prodigal, has to a good father.

That Prayer is a lifting-up of our thoughts to God, and the expression of the heart's desire in His Presence.

That Salvation consists in deliverance from misery, sin, and error; and that forms of religion are to be judged of principally by their helping to this salvation or otherwise.

That it will fare with us ill or well after death, just as we have lived well or ill in this world, according to the words of the prophet—"Say ye of the righteous that it shall be well with him, for he shall eat the fruit of his doings. Woe unto the wicked, it shall be ill with him, for the reward of his hands shall be given him."—Isaiah iii., 10, 11.

Finally, that God is more Good than the best of fathers, and more Just than the most upright of judges; that we must therefore have absolute confidence that He will always do with us as is for our true welfare; and that any doctrine which asserts or implies the contrary is to be rejected as blasphemous and false. —Rev. Charles Hargrove, M.A.

Our Sermonette.

LO! GOD IS HERE!

By the Rev. JAMES MARTINEAU.

"And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent."—Acts xvii., 30.

Paul, it would appear, looked with a very different feeling on times past and times present. Behind him he saw the age of ignorance and irreligion, so dark and wild, that life appeared to lie quite outside the realm of Providence, and earth to be covered by no heaven. Around him, he beheld the very era of God, in which the third heaven seemed almost within reach, and life was so filled with voices of duty and hope, that it appeared like some vast whispering gallery to render what else had been a divine silence and mystery, audible and articulate. Behind, he saw a world abandoned, from which the Great Ruler seemed to have retired, or at least averted the light of his countenance; to which he spoke no word, and gave no intelligible sign; about whose doings it were painful to say much; for so little were they in the likeness of his government, so abhorrent from the spirit of his sway, that they must have been enacted during the slumber of his power. But NOW, the hour of awakening had arrived: the foul dream of the world's profaneness must be broken; and Heaven would forbear no more. The divine light was abroad again: divine tones were floating through this lower atmosphere, and came, like a solemn music across the carnival shouts of sensualism and sin. Out of hearing of these tones the far-travelled Apostle never passed: they reached him through the rush of waters, as he sailed by night over the Ægean: the voluble voices of Athens could not drown them: they vibrated through the traffic and the cries of Roman streets, and even pierced the brutal acclamations of the amphitheatre; they were ubiquitous as God, who was EVERYWHERE commanding ALL men to repent. Whether in his own life, or in the

world, Paul found THE PAST TO BE PROFANE, THE PRESENT, DIVINE.

With us this order is reversed. Our faith delights to expound, not what God is doing NOW, but what he did ONCE; to prove that FORMERLY he was much concerned with the affairs of this earth and the spirits of men, though he has abstained from personal intervention for many ages, and become a spectator of the scene. That voice which commanded all men to repent resounds no more; its date has gone clear away into antiquity; and it can faintly reach us only through the dead report of a hundred witnesses. Once it was the very spirit of God quivering over the soul of man,—a mountain air stirring on the face of the waters. The frosts of time may have fixed the surface, and caught the form; but how different this from the trembling movement of our humanity beneath the sweep of that living breath! No such holy murmur reaches us, to whom the PRESENT IS EARTHLY, and THE PAST, DIVINE.

* * * * * *

The same temper which leads us to search for Deity only in distant times causes us to banish him also into distant space, and persuades us that he is not HERE, but THERE. He is thought to dwell above, beneath, around the earth; but whoever thinks of meeting him on its very dust? Awfully he shrouds the abyss and benignly he gazes on us from the stars: but in the field and the street no trace of him is felt to be. Under the ocean, and in the desert, and on the mountain top, he is believed to rest; but into the nearer haunts of town and village we rarely conceive him to penetrate. Yet where better could wisdom desire his presence than in the common homes of men,—in the thick cares, and heavy toils, and grievous sorrows of humanity? For surely if Nature needs him much in her solitudes, life requires him more in the places of passion and of sin. And in truth, if we cannot feel him near us in this world we could approach him, it is greatly to be feared, in no other. . . . . O, my friends, if there be nothing celestial without us, it is only because all is earthly within; if no divine colours upon our lot it is because the holy light is faded on the soul: if our Father seems distant it is because we have taken our portion of goods and travelled into a far country to set up for OURSELVES that we may foolishly ENJOY, rather than reverently SERVE. Whenever he is imagined to be remote and almost slumbering be assured it is human faith that is really heavy and on the verge of sleep, drowsy with too much ease, or tired with too much sense: that it has lapsed from the severe and manly strivings of duty and affection and given itself over to indulgence, and become the lazy hireling of prudence. An Epicurean world inevitably makes an Epicurean God: and when we cease to do anything from spontaneous loyalty to the great Ruler, we necessarily doubt whether he can have occasion to do anything for us. . . . . Of nothing may we be more sure than this: that if we cannot sanctify our present lot we could sanctify no other. Our heaven and our Almighty Father are there or nowhere. The obstructions of that lot are given for us to heave away by the concurrent touch of a holy spirit, and labour of strenuous will; its gloom for us to tint with some celestial light; its mysteries are for our worship; its sorrows for our trust; its perils for our courage; its temptations for our faith. Soldiers of the Cross it is not for us, but for our Leader and our Lord, to choose the field: it is ours, taking the station which he assigns, to make it the field of truth and honour, though it be the field of death.

It is part of the illusion which contrasts us with Paul, that we esteem God to be WITHOUT us, rather than WITHIN us, a mode of conception which I believe to be ultimately fatal to that religious life from the incipient feebleness of which it originally springs. . . . . We find men ready enough to allow that there is no place where God is not, perhaps no time when his external power is not active in some realm or other. And why then withhold from him that internal and spiritual sphere of which all else is but the theatre and the temple? What can dead space WANT with the divine presence compared with the ever-perilled soul of man, spiritually trembling on the verge of grief or sin. Shall we coldly speculate on the physical Omnipresence of the Infinite, and question the ubiquity of his moral power?—diffuse him as an atmosphere, and forget that he is a Mind?—plead for his mechanical action on matter, and doubt the contact of spirit with spirit?—admit the agency of the artist on his work, and deny the embrace of the Father and the child? It were indeed strange if this anomaly were true. Where IS this blessed object of our worship, if not within our souls? . . . . I pretend not to draw the untraceable line that separates his being from ours. The decisions of the Will, doubtless, are our own, and constitute the proper sphere of our personal agency. But in a region higher than the Will,—the realm of spontaneous thought and emotion,—there is scope enough for his "abode with us." Whatever is most deep within us is the reflection of himself. All our better love and higher aspirations are the answering movements of our nature in harmonious obedience to his spirit. Whatever dawn of blessed sanctity and wakening of purer conceptions opens on our consciousness are the sweet touch of his morning light within us. His inspiration is perennial, and he never ceases to work within us if we consent to will and to do his good pleasure.

(Abbreviated from "Endeavours after the Christian Life," published 1843).

God entrusts to all
Talents few or many;
None so young and small
That they have not any.

Home Circle.

My own fireside! Those simple words
Can bid the sweetest dreams arise;
Awaken feeling's tenderest chords,
And fill with tears of joy mine eyes.
What is there my wild heart can prize
That doth not in thy sphere abide,—
Haunt of my home-bred sympathies,
My own—my own fireside.

—Alaric A. Watts.

Parents,—Teachers! do not despair of good. No good word spoken in a kindly way can possibly be without good effect.

A lady missionary was complaining to a simple Hindoo woman that it seemed no use teaching her anything.

"You forget all I tell you," she said. "Your mind is just like a sieve: as fast as I pour water in, it runs out again."

The woman's reply was this:

"It is very true my mind is like just a sieve. I am very sorry I forget so much; but then you know when you pour clean water into a sieve, though it all runs out again, yet it makes the sieve clean. I am sorry I have forgotten so much of what you told me last week, but what you did tell me made my mind clean."

Parents,—Teachers! If you do this you do much more than you know. Let your light shine and leave results to God.

God's love the past year led us through,
His love the new year gives;
Each month hath blesings fresh and new
For everything that lives.
Let bitter winds their hardest blow,
Let desolation reign;
From out their graves beneath the snow
New worlds shall live again.

—M. J. Savage.

LEARNING FROM EXAMPLE.

The Man Jesus is our grand example. He is the teacher and we are the pupils. "Learn of me!" he says.

Some writer tells us the following:—

"I have recalled gratefully again and again a word that my drawing master gave me when I was a little lad, blundering at my first lesson. I had set the copy before me, and was trying very hard to reproduce it—but, alas! what crooked lines. How impossible it was for anything to be like my picture—and yet how impossible it seemed to make my picture what it should be. Smudged and messed by many rubbings out and many failures, trying only made the matter worse.

Then came the master and took the pencil, and in the twinkling of an eye the thing was done—every stroke firm, straight, and exact. Then my despair was completed—I had tried so hard and failed so utterly, and he had done it without trying at all! I laid down the pencil and said:

"I shall never draw."

"Nonsense," said the master cheerily, patting me on the shoulder, "you can draw as well as I could when I was your age."

What! There was a time when he bungled and blundered? I looked up in amazement.

"I meant it," he said, amused at my look.

I was an artist then—if never since. He had come down and back to me, and was himself again the little awkward beginner, and I was lifted up and linked on to him. That was gentleness, and it made me great. It saw not the copy only. It was not ashamed of the blundering little pupil; it came down to be a child that it might help the child up towards the artist. Look at it. Is not that the very gospel of God?"

Jesus did not become the great example all at once. He had to learn through childhood up to manhood, and by learning he became so good and so great in character that men called him Christ—the God-anointed one. And we may become Christs too—if we are willing to learn, and if we will plod and strive and persevere,—making even our mistakes the stepping-stones to higher things.

And we cannot copy a finer example than Jesus of Nazareth.

A crowd of troubles passed him by
As he with courage waited;
He said, "Where do you troubles fly
When you are thus belated?"
"We go," they said, "to those who mope,
Who look on life dejected,
Who weakly say good-bye to hope—
We go where were expected."

—Exchange.

QUERIES.

There has just been a very interesting and instructive Palestine Exhibition in Manchester. It was organised and promoted in aid of the funds of the Society for the Conversion of the Jews to Trinitarian Christianity. A Unitarian minister was asked to go. He admitted he should like to go, but that he could not do anything to assist a Society to convert Jews (who are Unitarians) to Trinitarian Christianity, and therefore must deny himself the pleasure.

Was this narrowness? Was it bigotry? Was it right?

Does the following give a true idea of God:

"He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision."—Psalm II., 4? And are such passages—abounding in the Psalms—suitable for reading in Church and Sunday School?

Postal Mission Work.

By Miss FLORENCE HILL,

Hon. Sec. Central Postal Mission and Unitarian Workers' Union.

We have had so many kind letters from Postal Mission friends and correspondents far and near, wishing success to the Unitarian cause and blessings on our labours, that we gladly welcome the opportunity of sending a New Year's greeting to our co-workers, and expressing the encouragement it is to hear so constantly of their unremitting and successful efforts to spread enlightened religious views by lending and circulating tracts and books, and by argument and discussion. It is true that some who are most decidedly one with us in thought have a most extraordinary fear of the name Unitarian, and still stand "shivering on the brink." Well! it behoves those of us who are Unitarian to vindicate that name and to make it so much loved and respected that people shall be proud and eager to join. I received a pleasant letter this week from a correspondent in Wales telling me that after the visit of the Unitarian Van he had joined the Unitarian Chapel, and enumerating the varied ways in which he was helping, and he ended by saying:—"So you see I am now a full-fledged Unitarian." Let us hope that in this new year there may be many more "full-fledged Unitarians," and that when they have found their wings they may soar, and like Wordsworth's skylark, "be true to the kindred points of heaven and home."

The new theologians have in some cases a good deal to put up with through the narrowness and bigotry of those around them. This, for instance, was the experience of one earnest-minded young man. He writes:—

"On Sunday afternoon, after the class had dispersed, I walked down the road with the secretary of the Sunday School, who asked me whether I had talked with the members of my class about Mr. Campbell and the New Theology. I said "Yes." He asked me whether I was aware that it was not in line with Wesleyan Methodism, and that I was not teaching what was expected of a teacher in the Wesleyan Methodist Sunday School. I told him I had thoughts of resigning rather than appear in a false position. He said that he considered that that was the most straightforward thing to do. That same evening I sent in my resignation. The offices I held were: Secretary of the Literary Section of the Wesley Guild, leader of the Junior Bible Class, Secretary, Treasurer, and Registrar of the Band of Hope. It really meant a lot for me to leave a work in which I was interested, but still I felt I could do none other. I could not remain in a false position. Several of the young men had expressed their desire to accompany me to the City Temple on Christmas Day, and asked me if they might. I replied "Certainly if you care to come." The young men declared afterwards that it was the best sermon they had ever heard preached. A few days later the minister called and lectured me for two and a half hours on the New Theology and "that apostate, the Rev. R. J. Campbell."

In referring to the young men he wrote: "You will be called upon to reckon with God, their parents, and with me for this deceptive, unmanly, and un-Christian attempt to lead away these young fellows whose souls are not in your keeping, but God's." Seeing they are, as the minister says, in God's keeping, not mine, I do not think we need quake as to their destiny. The minister wrote: "The church will continue to pray for you and your wife. Please scorn to decoy young life into traps. Leave those young men alone, they are the property of the Wesleyan Methodist Church, the subjects of mothers' prayers! Don't try at breaking hearts as well as leading life astray from its faith. If you write don't deal in New Theology trash. What I am concerned in is not your mental mists, but the interests of your heart."

Let us hope that those who cannot consciously remain in bondage or shut their eyes to the results of modern scholarship, will have the courage openly to avow the truth and to follow wherever it may lead. God and truth must be one, and if He is for us, who can be against us.

In conclusion I should like to draw attention to Lady Wilson's offer to send sermons weekly. There must be many in isolated places and cut off from congenial religious surroundings to whom it would be a great boon.

What are You Good For?

"When you say that a thing is good, you mean that it is good 'for something'—good for some purpose or use.

What then is a man, a human being, good for? Some people, you will say, are not good for much. Yet even these might be helped to make themselves better. We repeat, asking the question in its full meaning: "What is man good for?" He is good for what he is fitted for, and ALL that he is fitted for.

The use or purpose of our life means all the best that we are capable of being, of doing, of becoming, in body and mind, in thought and feeling. We are made for that." (S. H. Mellone, in "Laws of Life.")

This is a good thought for the New Year.

An ear that waits to catch
A hand upon the latch;
A step that hastens its sweet rest to win.
A world of care without,
A world of strife shut out,
A world of love shut in.

—Dora Greenwell.

Book Notices.

"Milton on the Son of God and the Holy Spirit" from his Treatise on Christian Doctrine, with Introduction by Alexander Gordon, M.A., British and Foreign Unitarian Association, Essex Hall, Essex-street, London, W.C. 1s. 6d., by post 1s. 9d.

This volume is a timely production coming ready for the Milton Tercentenary just past. It consists of a full reprint of the two chapters on the Son of God, and the Holy Spirit, taken from Milton's "De Doctrina Christiana," which was not published till 1825, having been hidden away nearly 150 years after the poet's death, and discovered in 1823 amongst some State papers. In this work Milton's denial of the doctrine of the Trinity and of the deity of Jesus and the Holy Spirit, is set forth at length, and two chapters here given contain his evidences and arguments in proof of his contention, on purely Scriptural grounds. These chapters are in themselves remarkably exhaustive in their examination of the force and meaning of Scriptural texts. It is questionable whether there is a more detailed or logically conclusive investigation of these subjects anywhere to be found.

Mr. Gordon in his introduction describes the circumstances which led to the original manuscript coming to be hidden away, and those attending its discovery and subsequent translation and publication. He also exposes the falseness of the claim which has been made that Milton had any sympathy with Roman Catholicism and includes a description of the other contents of the treatise from which these two chapters are taken. The British and Foreign Unitarian Association have done wisely in issuing this book, and especially at a time when renewed interest in John Milton and in the views he held has been awakened so widely by the Tercentenary celebrations.

"The Christmas Birth-Poem," by William C. Gannett, British and Foreign Unitarian Association, Essex Hall, London, W.C. 6d. net.

The object of Mr. Gannett's pamphlet is indicated by implication in the opening paragraph: "Many people are asking to-day, Is the Christmas Birth-Story as told in the Gospels, literally true? If not, why not? And if not true, how did it rise as a story and enshrine itself in the two Gospels? And why is it that those who do not think it is history love it so well?"

These questions are answered here in a manner which, while it is uncompromising, is sympathetic to the old views as well as to the new thought. Another quotation will indicate in what spirit: "Once to all Christians it (the Gospel Birth-Story) was, still to most Christians it is, 'fact'; to others, increasing in number, it has become but a beautiful poem. As a 'belief' it is dying or dead; as a poem, it is immortal. We are not going to say 'I believe' to it, as they said in the ancient creed. In the ancient creed it was honestly said. It is not honest for such as we to say so to-day either in nursery, kindergarten, or church. Our children shall know what we mean by it, just as they shall know what we mean by the other Christmas poem of Santa Claus; nor will they enjoy either poem the less for the knowing." This booklet is a fine treatment of an important subject, particularly suitable to put into the hands of young people and older people, and would make a most appropriate Christmas greeting if sent to friends along with the Christmas cards.

"Laws of Life," an Introduction to the Elements of Ethics, by Sydney Herbert Mellone, M.A., D.Sc., Sunday School Association Essex Hall, Essex-street, London, W.C., 1s. net.

Dr. Mellone's little book of 160 pages comprises nine chapters on the following subjects: "What is the use of Living?" "Our Real Guides as to Conduct"; "True Self-regard v. Selfishness"; "Sympathy"; "Self-Control and Moral Freedom"; "Work and Play"; "Patriotism and Public Work"; "Social Justice"; "The Great Plan." The subjects are explained in simple and homely manner suitable to the understanding of young people; and the book is so written as to be suitable either as a class reader or as a text book in the hands of a teacher, or as an introduction to a study of the chief moral laws of our being for the general reader. Sunday Schools will find this a serviceable addition to their class-books, or to their Teachers' Library. It will fill a place not supplied so far by any other available book.

"Miracles and Myths of the New Testament" by Joseph May, LL.D. Philip Green, 5, Essex-street, Strand, London, W.C. 1s. 6d. net.

It is well that the people in the pew should get right ideas concerning New Testament Miracles and the mythical elements in the Gospel records. In Dr. Joseph May's essays on this subject there is presented to the reader just that reverently rationalistic treatment which helps the seeker after truth and at the same time appraises the miraculous and the mythical at their real value and accounts for the existence of such in the Scripture records. These essays were published in the United States in 1901, along with some others on "Inspiration," "Sinlessness," and "The Christ Ideal." But this is their first appearance from an English publisher. Dr. May says that "Miracles cease when men cease to believe and expect them." He not only treats of "The New Testament miracles" and "The Origin of Belief in Miracles," but of "The Myth of the Resurrection of Jesus," "The Myth of the Deity of Jesus," and of "Jesus as he was." "Intelligent doubt," declares the author, "is a higher and more fruitful condition than the certitude which is born of ignorance." In a really cheap and very readable form there is much information compacted together in these pages in a manner that is well suited to the clearing away of much ignorance in the minds of people who will read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them.

Notes and News.

CORRECTION: In the "John Milton" article last issue, p. 135, tenth line from foot of column 1, the word "before" should be substituted for "after," so as to read, "before he had wholly lost his eyesight"; and "Latin Secretary to Cromwell"—a phrase often used of Milton—should read, to be more exact:—"Latin Secretary to the Council of State."

RECEIVED too late; notice in next issue: "John Milton: Man, Patriot, Poet," by W. G. Tarrant, B.A., 1/- net (see advt.); "For Boys," by Ernest Edwards, Anglo American Book Co., Wimbledon, S.W., 1/-; "Miss Julia Gaskell," an address by Rev. A. Cobden Smith; "The Open Principle," an address by Rev. L. P. Jacks, M.A., 3d.; "The City," 6d.

TO OUR READERS: Some individual subscribers whose last subscription ran out several months ago, and who still receive their copies regularly, ought either to remit their subscriptions as soon as due or countermand their order. Reminders mean extra labour and postages. Will they please avoid causing further needless trouble?

This issue begins Volume VI. If there is a sufficient demand for copies of Volume V., 1908, now completed, the editor will compile an index and have a quantity bound. Unless fifty copies are demanded it has to be done at a loss. Fifty subscribers wanted (promises) for Vol. V. 1/- each, post free 1/3.

Mr. F. G. Jackson, Leeds, writes that Mr. F. J. Kitson is Lord Mayor, not Mayor, of Leeds. Though 13th Unitarian Mayor since 1837, some of his Unitarian predecessors held the position twice, and the late Sir John Ward three times, so that there have been 18 Unitarian appointments, 19 including the year 1837.

The Rev. T. P. Spedding, Missionary Agent of the B. and F. Unitarian Association, and Superintendent of the Van Mission, has concluded a very helpful tour of visitation of the churches of the Western Unitarian Union. In two weeks he preached 8 times, lectured 8 times, and visited 13 congregations.

Mr. Spedding makes an appeal on behalf of the Van Mission deficit of £300, urging all well-wishers of the mission to send donations to help clear this off before the close of the year.

The Rev. R. J. Campbell, M.A., of the City Temple, preached at the Roslyn Hill (Unitarian) Chapel on Thursday, Dec. 3rd.

Dec. 8th was the Rev. Dr. Robert Collyer's 80th birthday. It was celebrated by the New York Unitarian Club, in November, at which Mr. Andrew Carnegie was one of the speakers.

President Roosevelt has written a strong letter to a correspondent in reproof of the narrow spirit of theological opposition to W. H. Taft, the President-Elect, because he is a Unitarian.

Unitarian Services have been commenced at Hounslow, London, as an experiment; also lectures at Kirkham, near Preston.

A branch of the British League of Unitarian Women has been formed in Sheffield, and at Edinburgh.

Miss Julia Gaskell left £500 each to the Unitarian Home Missionary College and to Manchester College, Oxford, amongst other bequests.

Unitarian Bazaars or Sales of Work have been held at Holbeck, proceeds £230; Ipswich, £34; Mottram, £63; Ansdell, £34 10s. 0d.; Moss Side, Manchester, £112; Stockport, £130; Bradford, Chapel Lane, £300; Wood Green, London, £110-£120 (annual).

Todmorden Branch British L. U. Women has now 89 members enrolled.

A new church building has been opened at Kilburn, London, Rev. Chas. Roper, B.A., minister (congratulations!), Saturday, Dec. 5th.

Bank Street Chapel, Bury, Lancashire, dedication service, Nov. 15th, received 30 young people into membership; 18 young women, and 12 young men.

On Sunday, Dec. 6th, Sermons on "Milton," were preached in Unitarian Churches everywhere.

There was a very successful Milton Ter-centennial Celebration at Essex Hall, on Wednesday evening, Dec. 9th, under the auspices of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, with addresses on Milton as lover of music, as poet, as theologian, and as citizen.

The Rev. W. H. Drummond, B.A., of Belfast, has been appointed Editor of "The Inquirer" in succession to the Rev. V. D. Davis, B.A., and also to be superintendent minister of the Provincial Assembly of Churches of London and the South-Eastern Counties, and will enter upon his duties after next midsummer.

Recent University appointments include that of Dr. A. R. Skemp, son of the Rev. T. R. Skemp, Southampton, lecturer in English language and literature at Strassburg University, to be lecturer in English literature at Sheffield University; and Mr. E. W. Smith, M.Sc., of Manchester University, son of the Rev. H. Bodell Smith, Mottram, to be research chemist for methods of applying gas for heating purposes, at the University of Leeds.

MEETINGS: Bolton District Sunday School Union, at Bolton, Saturday, Nov. 21st, annual meeting; London Sunday School Society, Essex Hall, Nov. 21st; North-East ; Lancashire Sunday School Union, at Burnley, Nov. 21st; Liverpool Sunday School Society, Liverpool, Nov. 21st.

The Editor thanks all who have supported him in his enterprise during the last five years, and trusts that a larger number of churches and societies will co-operate with him to make the MONTHLY of more widespread service to our cause. He also thanks those who have occasionally contributed to these pages. He will endeavour to make this journal of increasing usefulness to the churches and the movement for reasonable religion for which it exists, and with the help of supporters looks with confidence to a bright year through 1909.

PULPIT CHANGES: Mr. M. T. Falconer, Manchester College, Oxford, appointed to Dudley Unitarian Chapel; Rev. Kenneth Bond, appointed, Free Christian Church, Leicester; Rev. W. H. Drummond, B.A., All Souls' Church, Belfast, resigned.

DEATHS: Mrs. G. Dawes Hicks, Cambridge, Nov. 29th; Miss M. C. Jevons, Burnham, Somerset, Nov. 21st, 81; Mrs. Joseph Lunn, Bowdon, Nov. 25th, 62; Mrs. J. W. Smith, Penwortham, Nov. 17th, 64; Miss Horrocks, Southport, Nov. 25th; Mr. John Roberts, Dunmurry, Co. Antrim, Nov. 25th, 64; Miss Atkinson, Larne, Co. Antrim, Nov. 24th; Miss Mary Johnson, Hull, Nov. 25th, 84; Mr. Julian Winser, Hampstead, Nov. 28th, 68; Miss Marian Pritchard ('Aunt Amy'), London, Dec. 9th, 62; Miss Mary Croft, Accrington, Dec. 2nd; Mrs. Philip Holland, Hendon, Dec. 4th, 89; Mr. R. D. Holt, the first Lord Mayor of Liverpool, Dec. 10th, 77; Mr. H. W. Gair, J.P., Liverpool, Dec. 1st, 83.

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— OR —
THE COMMITTEE .

Of every Unitarian Congregation, and to Church Members.

THE EDITOR OF

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